

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the background of the study, limitation of the study, problem statement, objectives of the study, and benefit of the study.

#### **A. Background of the Study**

Obsessions are the kind of way people get to get what they want and what people believe is the best thing they have to do to get their desires. People will try, try and keep trying again and will strive to achieve goals from desired. This is the way to get their wish.

This phenomenon can be the subject of sociology and psychology. Sociology is the study of the relationship between society. In sociology, obsession is one of the lifestyles to gain desire, strength, and respect in society. While Psychology is a science that studies behavior, attitudes, and habits of humans. In psychology, obsessions educate people to do anything to achieve their goals. He sees that someone who has hope, they must fight for themselves. Feeling insatiable, having big dreams and hard work is an act that is reflected in the human personality because of obsession.

*Freedom Writers* is a film and based on a true story which is taken from The *Freedom Writers* Diary by teacher Erin Gruwell

and her students. *Freedom Writers* are one of the movies that consist of any kind of obsessions. This film is directed by Richard LaGravenese and produced by Michael Shamberg, Danny Devito, and Stacey Sher. The location of making this film is in Los Angeles, California USA. The major characters are starred by Hillary Swank (Erin Gruwell), Imelda Staunton (Margaret Campell), and Aprill Lee Hernandez (Eva Benitez). This film is released on January 5th, 2007 in the United States.

The *Freedom Writers* film tells about problems in educational institutions, racism, gang members among students, juvenile delinquents, and underprivileged students. The problem with the educational institution is the teaching-learning process and school policy Erin Gruwell has to face as a new teacher. In the matter of racism, it arises when Erin observes the separation of racial areas made in the room, as the students take their seats: the right back is filled by black gang members, and the Latins sit on the left side of the room. In addition, Asians took a seat on the front right and a Caucasian boy sat in front. Erin was surprised to see the riot fighting in a gang war inside and outside of her classroom. Almost all of his students are poor students. Most of them went to school to take three buses and almost ninety minutes to arrive at school and they also did not have good reading and learning skills. Besides, his students did not obey him and kept

talking to him. At the beginning of his teaching, Erin never gained respect from her students.

Erin never surrenders to change her student's behavior and attitude. Although she does not get support from another, she has a conviction that she can do the best for her job. She tries several methods in her teaching-learning process. She invites Holocaust survivors to talk with her students about their experience and then takes them on a trip to The Museum of Tolerance. Erin also asks for them to read *The Diary of a Young Girl* or *Anne Frank's Diary*. Her colleagues and her department chair of Wilson High School regard her methods as an unorthodox so they scorn her. Erin tries not to care. She thinks that she has to make changes. She knows that her students do not only need theory in the classroom but also they need real experience.

Her methods do not get support from her school in realizing her purposes; she takes two part-time jobs and spends more time at school. That thing makes her husband, Scoot, protest her and finally, Erin has to separate from her husband. In another side, she has never imagined previously that there is the change in her student's behavior and attitude. Her methods are successful. At the last, Erin compiles her students' stories in a book and it is named *The Freedom Writers Diary*. That are the Obsession of Erin Gruwell have to change the moral of her students more better.

The writer discovered four reasons why the writer chooses the movie as the research. The first is the unstoppable obsession of the major character. The major character is an important thing that should behave in each movie. For example in *Freedom Writers* movie. The major character here is Ms. Erin Gruwell has an unstoppable obsession to make the student behavior is better in their life. Many are in gangs and almost all know somebody that has been killed by gang violence. The Latinos hate the Cambodians who hate the blacks and so on. The only person the students hate more is Ms. Gruwell. It isn't until Erin holds an unsanctioned discussion about a recent drive-by shooting death that she fully begins to understand what she's up against. And it isn't until she provides an assignment of writing a daily journal - which will be not graded and will remain unread by her unless they so choose - that the students begin to open up to her. As Erin tries harder and harder to have resources provided to teach properly (which often results in her needing to pay for them herself through working second and third jobs), she seems to face greater resistance, especially from her colleagues, such as Margaret Campbell, her section head, who lives by regulations and sees such resources as a waste, and Brian Gelford, who will protect his "privileged" position of teaching the senior honors classes at all cost. Erin also finds that her teaching job is placing a strain on her marriage to

Scott Casey, a man who seems to have lost his own idealistic way in life.

The second reason is the plot of the movie. The plot is the arrangement of the story. The director must present the event like the real. The plot in this movie is interesting because it begins with the scene of the Rodney King riots that shows the racial conflict. Then this film tells about the bad experiences of the students. Next, the film shows the new experiences that change the view of the students. It makes this film like the reality condition.

The third is character and characterization. This film is based on the true story that shows the racial conflict among the races. This film tells the struggle of Eva and her friends in the 203 room to survive in their life and keep their group. It also tells the attempt of the Erin as a teacher who always supports her students and tries to give the better insight for them. The director must make the strong character in the major character to make the real character that shows the gangster and the kind teacher.

And the last reason is the implicit message of this movie. The social issue about the racial conflict is reflected in this movie. This movie tells the racial conflict that happened among Latino, Asian, Black, and White. Almost the students ever got the bad experience because of the difference of their race. They lost their

family and their friends. This condition creates the bad moral in the student and makes them keep themselves and their group.

Based on these reasons above, the writer will analyze Freedom Writers movie using individual psychological approach. Therefore, the writer is interested in conducting this research entitled “*UNSTOPPABLE OBSESSION OF ERIN GRUWEL REFLECTED IN FREEDOM WRITERS MOVIE (2007): AN INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH.*”

#### **B. Limitation of the Study**

This study is limited to the ways that Erin uses to reach her unstoppable obsession by struggle hard and using many methods. This study uses Individual Psychological Approach.

#### **C. Problem Statement**

Based on the description of the background above, the problems of the study are the unstoppable obsession. Referring to the problems, the researcher formulates the research questions as follows:

1. What kinds of obsession of Erin are found in the movie?
2. How is the unstoppable obsession of the major character reflected in *Freedom Writers* Movie?
3. What factors push Erin to have the unstoppable obsession?

#### **D. Objective of the Study**

According to the problem statement above, the objective of the study are as follows:

1. To describe the kinds of unstoppable obsession in the movie
2. To analyze the movie based on individual psychological approach.
3. To find out the factors of unstoppable obsession in the movie

#### **E. Benefit of the study**

##### **1. Theoretical Benefit**

Theoretically, the study gives the contribution to the larger body of knowledge particularly literary study on *Freedom Writers* Movie.

##### **2. Practical Benefit**

To rich the literary study, particularly among students of Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta who have an interest in the literary study.